

ANNUAL REPORT OF MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH
FOR THE YEAR 1941

To The Chairman and Members,
Dawlish Urban District Council.

This report, the third of the War period, is drawn up in accordance with the Ministry of Health Circular dated 24th March, 1942, which directs that it shall be on much the same lines as the two previous Wartime reports and confined to essential matters affecting public health and in particular those arising out of the War.

INFECTIOUS DISEASE

Altogether there were 149 cases, an unprecedented number for Dawlish but not so serious as it would appear as 131 were Measles. Apart from that there was not much more than usual. As regards Diphtheria, the District was very fortunate in having only 8 cases, 6 of which were Evacuees, as this serious disease was very prevalent in surrounding districts. Two of the cases of Cerebro Spinal Fever were introduced from without, as also were the cases of Typhoid and Paratyphoid.

TABLE OF NOTIFIABLE DISEASES

| <u>DISEASE.</u> | <u>CASES.</u> | <u>HOSPITAL.</u> | <u>DEATHS.</u> |
|----------------------|---------------|------------------|----------------|
| Measles | 131 | 0 | 1 |
| Diphtheria | 8 | 8 | 1 |
| Cerebro Spinal Fever | 3 | 3 | - |
| Erysipelas | 2 | 0 | - |
| Pneumonia | 2 | 0 | - |
| Scarlet Fever | 1 | 1 | - |
| Typhoid Fever | 1 | 1 | - |
| Paratyphoid Fever | 1 | 1 | - |

TUBERCULOSIS

Three cases were notified during the year, one male, and two females, all pulmonary. At the end of the year, there were about 50 tuberculous persons living in the District, the same number as the year before. There were four deaths from the disease.

IMMUNISATION AGAINST DIPHTHERIA

The prevalence of the disease in neighbouring Districts and the timely broadcasts from the Ministry of Health produced a fairly encouraging response on the part of the parents to the offer of free immunisation and the following figures were the result:-

Children who completed the course of two doses numbered 961.

| | |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Devon Children under 5 years - 64 | Devon Children over 5 years - 447 |
| Evacuees under 5 years - 62 | Evacuees over 5 years - 338 |

The proportion of Devon Children who were done was considerably higher than that of the Evacuees and taking into account those who were done a few years ago, the town should be fairly well protected.

INFANT WELFARE CENTRE

Though, owing to their return to London, there was a big drop in the attendance of Evacuees, that of the Devon Mothers and Children was very little below the average.

Devon Mothers on Register - 82 - Infants - 31 - Toddlers - 69.

Evacuee Mothers - 77 - Infants - 18 - Toddlers - 63.

THE EVACUEES

Though still with us in large numbers, many owing to the decrease in Enemy activity over London, have returned to their homes. On 31st December, 1940, there were approximately 3200 evacuees established in the District, but by 31st December, 1941, this number had been reduced to about 800. This is regrettable, as there is a very good chance of their wishing they were back again, and some may be too late.

THE EVACUEE HOSTEL

As mentioned in the last report, the Great Cliff Hotel was requisitioned and equipped as a Hostel for difficult children, and also a Sick Bay for Scabies and other skin diseases. As this combination was for several reasons not found to be satisfactory, the Ministry of Health suggested that Teignmouth, which was in much the same difficulty, should join forces with Dawlish in running (a) the Hostel at Teignmouth for difficult children, (b) a Sick Bay at Dawlish for contagious skin diseases, and (c) another Sick Bay at Dawlish for sick children that needed nursing. The suggestion was adopted by the two Councils, and the Sunrise Hostel and Swineshead Cottage were requisitioned and equipped, the latter having a trained Nurse in charge. Time will show how the arrangement works out.

VITAL STATISTICS

Population (Mid 1941) - 6724

| | M. | F. | TOTAL |
|---------------------------------|----|----|--------------------------------------|
| <u>Live Births</u> (Legitimate) | 38 | 38 | } 41 - Rate of 10.2 per 1000 people. |
| (Illegitimate) | 2 | 3 | |

Average rate for last 10 years- 9.6 per 1000 people.
England and Wales Rate - 14.2 per 1000 people.

| | | |
|----------------------------------|---|--|
| <u>Still Births</u> (Legitimate) | 1 | } 4 - Rate of 38.4 per 1000 births. (live and still). |
| (Illegitimate) | 1 | |

| | | | |
|-------------------|----|----|--|
| <u>Deaths</u> | 49 | 56 | } 105 - Rate of 13.2 per 1000 people. - Rate of 12.9 per 1000 people. |
| England and Wales | | | |

Deaths under 1 year of age

| | | | |
|-------------------|---|---|--|
| (Legitimate) | 4 | 1 | } 5 - Rate of 50 per 1000 live births. - Rate of 59 per 1000 live births. |
| England and Wales | | | |

Maternal Mortality - Nil.

(Signed) W. H. SCOTT.

Medical Officer of Health.

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